commencement of production during which the firm need not fulfil any export commitment. These firms are required to achieve fifty percent indigenisation by third year and seventy percent by fifth year. Hence, sufficient time is available with these companies for achieving indigenisation and export obligation. Thus it is premature to arrive at any conclusion.

(c) Since inception of new Automobile Policy, six companies have been issued import licences for Rs. 1346 crores for import of CKD/SKD kits/components.

(d) and (e) Does not arise.

Simplification of export-import norms

2344. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently simplified in the export-import norms; and

(b) if so, the salient features thereof and the manner in which this policy would help the Exporters?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) The Export-Import Policy aims at simplification of the various export import related procedures and it is an on going process. Several measures have been taken to improve the competitive edge of Indian products and to reduce the transactional cost and time. Some of these measures include reduction in the rate of export credit, inclusion of Special Customs duty in fixation of DEPB rates as well as drawback, reduction in threshold limit of zero duty EPCG scheme to specified sector, setting up of Private Bonded Warehouse for exports as well as imports, issuance of Advance Licence with positive value addition, grant of license to status holder on automatic basis and decentralisation of licensing functions.

Boosting export of Agricultural products

2345. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring out a policy paper on the export of agricultural products;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to boost export of agricultural and processed food products?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) Policy of exports of agricultural products from an integral part of the Export Import Policy of the country. The policy regarding exports of agricultural and processed food products is governed principally by the concerns of India's food security, maximising farm incomes and earning foreign exchange. Review of export performance of agricultural products is an on-going process and accordingly policy interventions are made, as and when considered necessary, with a view to making agricultural exports increasingly viable.

(c) Some of the steps taken/proposed to be taken to enhance exports of agricultural and processed food products include:—

1. Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical knowhow of farmers through demonstrations, training and publicity, rejuvenation of old orchards, area expansion, supply of minikits for vegetables and improving productivity and training of farmers.
2. Provision of soft loans for setting up of grading/processing centres, auction platforms, ripening/curing chambers and quality testing equipment.
3. Providing financial assistance to exporters/growers/Co-operative Societies for development of

infrastructural facilities such as purchase of specialised transport units, establishment of pre-cooling/ cold storage facilities, integrated post-harvest handling systems (pack houses).

4. Grant of financial assistance for improved packaging, strengthening of quality control.

5. Establishment of vapour heat treatment facilities for improving the acceptability of the product especially the mangoes in overseas markets.

6. Grant of Air Freight Subsidy for exports of selected fresh vegetables and fruits.

7. Arranging promotional campaigns such as buyer-seller meets and participation in important international fairs and exhibitions.

8. Setting up of integrated cargo handling and cold storage facilities at various International Airports for handling export of perishable items such as fresh fruits and vegetables.

9. Providing assistance for setting up of laboratories for testing of products to ensure quality; technology transfer; process upgradation and product development.

10. Providing assistance in development of date-base and dissemination of market information.

Export of substandard goods

2346. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued any direction to Ports to prepare list of exporters who have been charged with exporting substandard goods;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have since received any list from the Ports;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action Government have taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Instructions regarding blacklisting of exporters of sub-standard goods have been issued. The instructions *inter-alia* envisage that if after an enquiry by the Committee set up for the purpose of investigation and settlement of quality complaints at Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Cochin, Ahmedabad, Ludhiana, Mumbai, Kanpur, Calcutta & Chennai under the Chairmanship of the concerned Jt. Director General of Foreign Trade at the Ports, it is established that the exporter has wilfully exported subs-standard goods, such exporters including partner, proprietors and directors, as figuring in their application filed for Importer Exporter Code, shall be blacklisted and no further I.E. code shall be issued to firms having any such blacklisted persons, directors, promotors, chief executives etc. For cancellation of I.E. code or any other enforcement action envisaged by the Committee, references have to be made by them to the Diretor General of Foreign Trade.

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. Information regarding two exporting firms has been received from Port Offices. These firms have been blacklisted for exporting sub-standard goods by the O/o Jt. Director General of Foreign Trade, Ludhiana & Mumbai respectively.

Technology mission for increasing production of Spices

2347. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a Technology Mission to increase production of Spices in the State of Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and